



John Wesley's Teapot

Josiah Wedgwood paid his respects to the great preacher by making for him a blue and white teapot inscribed with the grace which is still sung by Methodists all over the world. Many replicas of this teapot have been made since.

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# WESTWARD HO!

By "SUNDOWNER"

WHEN I first saw Reefton many years ago it was everything that a dead mining town is supposed to be—untidy, listless, and buried in rust. When I returned a few days ago I

## TOWNS CAN RISE AGAIN

was almost disappointed to see it alive again. There were still rusty roofs, and untidy corners when you looked for them, but there were many new houses, and I thought more paint in every street than in the whole town as it used to be. There were, in fact, plain signs of a boom—houses going up, streets being cleared and repaved, transport trucks on the move, service stations overloaded with work. The gold town was 10 years dead. The coal town had come back to life.

But no one could tell me why. With the exception of the open-cast mines, one of which I visited and heard that it was returning its working owners ten pounds each a day, the pits were neither new nor reorganised. They were simply busy now and idle when I saw them before. Miners then were working about a half or a third of their time, and if you asked them why the answer was always the same. The pits had no orders. Now there are more orders than any mine can meet, and I could not get the explanation. There is a reason; but the miners themselves professed not to know what it is; and it certainly seemed strange to me that in 1947, when oil and water are providing more power than ever in our history, there should be a simultaneous and insatiable demand for coal. But it was pleasant to see Reefton on its feet again and laughing at the idea that when towns die they stay dead for ever.

MURCHISON to most of us is a name on the map; a township we pass through on the Nelson-West Coast road, and at once forget. It was no more than that to me till I came to rest there three weeks ago. I had passed through twice without stopping, and also, I now realise, without taking in any more of its beauty than comes to us through the window of a speeding car. But Americans would build mountain houses there, make a noise about it on the air, and in the meantime, of course, lift its face a little and put on some paint.

I don't know how high the surrounding mountains are, and I get hot when

I think what has happened to their bush; I mean what human hands have done to it since the earthquake tore holes through it in 1929. But a great deal of the bush still remains, softening without obliterating the rugged outlines and intensifying the boldness of the modelling. At each point of the compass there are a gorge and a river, and the settled area, about two square miles of open country, almost but not quite flat, on which the sun, if it shines



"If I had no gorse I would have no sheep, and that goes for most of my neighbours too"

at all, beats all day, is far enough away from the mountains not to seem hemmed in. Any house in such a setting is a home with a view, and although there is no sign yet that artists have worked there, the whole area is an architect's paradise in which the master plan was drawn a million years ago. It neither surprises nor troubles me that some desperate attempts have already been made to defy that plan. We creep aesthetically before we walk, and most of us never walk at all. But Murchison's day is coming. Sooner or later a boy will be born there whose eyes art will open. There is not much risk in the meantime that settlement will move fast enough to spoil his chances.

I DON'T know how many acres of gorse there are in Nelson or whether it is still gaining ground. I thought it had got away a good deal since I was last there, but I may have been wrong. In a journey of 700 miles I saw nothing as

## SCRUB TO GORSE

bad as on the hills round Wellington or on the approaches to Wanganui. But I still saw a lot of gorse. I saw hillsides wholly covered by gorse, and carrying no stock at all, and I saw extensive stretches where the sheep, if they were

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